

Andrew Smith: Technical University of Berlin (Semester 2, 2010)

UQ Program: Bachelor of Architectural Design

In August 2010, as a second-year Architecture student, I departed Brisbane en route to Technische Universität Berlin. I decided to find private accommodation in Europe's most exciting and creative capital and I don't regret this. Although I paid more than I would in a dorm, organising my own accommodation meant I could choose where to live in the city. Areas I recommend are Kreuzberg, Friedrichshain, Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg. As for budget, you can spend anywhere between 250 and 500 euro/month on a room. The price will usually cover all bills too, but make sure to check.

I spent a couple of weeks settling into daily life before the enrolment process began at TU Berlin. Very different to the Australian way, enrolling in a subject involves visiting a room or office at the uni at a certain date and time to physically sign a sheet of paper. Try to make some friends at orientation who can help you with this process! Once enrolled, I found the subjects rewarding and arranged in a similar structure and curriculum to those taught at UQ. Being in a 'world city' also means you get treated to some big names. Most memorable for me was Andres Lepik, curator of 'Small Scale, Big Change' at MoMA in New York. Berlin, although not 'beautiful', has been shaped by its history and is a fascinating place to be as an architecture student.

When I wasn't studying, I was falling in love with Berlin. The nightlife, the people and lifestyle are all *fantastisch*. Do yourself a favour and check out the bars and clubs in and around Oranienstrasse and Skalitzerstrasse in Kreuzberg, on Torstrasse in Mitte and the formidable, world-famous Berghain and Panorama Bar. Grab some excellent coffee (a REAL flat white) from Anitpodes in Prenzlauer Berg. Eat amazing Mexican food from Dolores near Alexanderplatz. Go shopping on Münzstrasse and Bergmannstrasse. The list is endless; Berlin offers everything you could possibly want. And you'll meet some amazing people along the way to experience it with.

I highly recommend an exchange to TU Berlin. You'll love the city and you'll find the study rewarding and enlightening. I promise.



Me exploring the Holocaust Memorial after the first snow.